LANTERN

NUMBER 26 — SUMMER 1979

Introduction

This edition of LANTERN should have contained two important announcements concerning the future of the publication, however, as will be seen, one of them has turned out to be something of a non-event. Firstly, at a special meeting of the BSIG held in June the future of the Group and of LANTERN was discussed. The outcome of the former need not bother us here suffice to say that, judging by the climate of the meeting the Group will remain active and healthy for the foreseeable future. Regarding the future of LANTERN it was agreed that certain change would be made which, although not particularly radical will change the magazine contents-wise in the coming issues. LANTERN was first formed as the 'organ' of the BSIG and therefore it was natural that its contents should cover the whole spectrum of subjects in which the Group interested itself, primarily because it was aimed solely at the BSIG membership. However in the past year or two material covering the whole range of subjects covered by the BSIG has not been forthcoming which has meant that your Editor has had to spend more and more time ferreting out material to ensure that the mag DID cater for all BSIG tastes until it reached a point where 50% of the material published in LANTERN originated from the editor while a backlog of material was ever-growing on certain subjects. This was done because your Editor felt that the first and foremost duty of LANTERN was to the BSIG members. Now, at the June meeting it was decided that the policy of an all-embracing LANTERN every issue should be abolished and that the Editor should only publish material that was actually contributed, even if it meant a perponderance of one subject from time to time. And so from henceforth, if no material is received on some subjects, ie UFOs, dowsing, ESP etc., then unfortunately these subjects will not be covered. It was also decided at the meeting that every effort should be made to keep LANTERN an East Anglian publication dealing primarily with information from this region. So, if you want to see LANTERN continue as an all-embracing magazine of East Anglian phenomena, get those typewriters rattling (or pens scratching) and CONTRIBUTE material on your pet subject. IN particular we would dearly love to receive more articles concerning readers' individual research into East Anglian phenomena, be it in the field of UFO research, psychical research, folklore, geomancy, leys or what have you.

Secondly the other announcement was to be (as readers who read the panel at the bottom of this page might notice) that Mike Burgess was to become the Joint editor of LANTERN. HOwever, for personal reasons, Mike has decided that he cannot undertake this at the moment, and so your sole editor remains, yours truly.....

IVAN BUNN.

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ECHOES FROM THE PAST - Nº2

'OLD BLUNDERHAZARD'

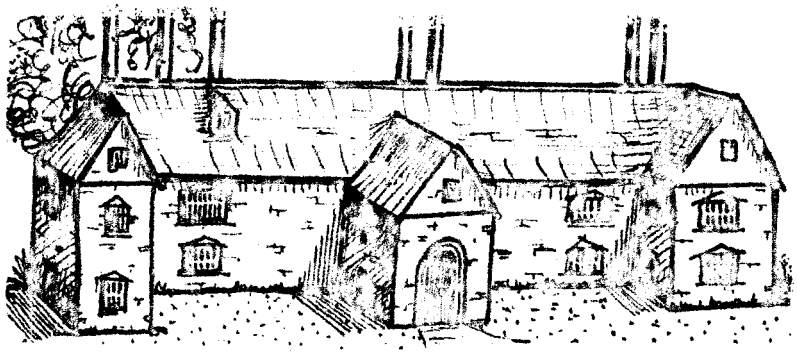
by

IVAN A.W. BUNN

In the first of these 'echoes from the past', a series of articles which I hope will flesh-out some of the ghost-stories and legends of Norfolk and Suffolk, I dealt with the sordid but factual account of 'Black Toby' who was Hanged for murder in 1750. In this second article we have to travel back another 200 years to seek out the origins of a legend, or rather legends, which although seperated by 20 miles are very similar. Both of these legends feature the ubiquitous 'phantom coach."

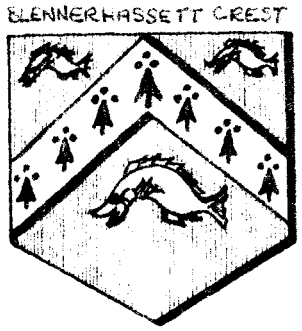
Lying close to the marshes of the River Waveney in Suffolk and about a half mile north of the Beccles/Bungay road, is a group of un-preposessing barns now the home of some rather bored-looking cattle. Standing in the shadow of of these barns it is hard to imagine that 400 years ago these buildings were part of Barsham Hall, built on an ancient moated site and a fitting home for the Lord of the Manor of Barsham. These buildings are reached by a gently sloping sandy lane from the main road, along which , according to a local legend, every Christmas Eve just before midnight, travels the ghost of 'Old Blunderhazaed' in a phantom coach pulled by six horses. His legendary journey takes him to 'Hasset's Tower' in Norwich and back again "...before he may snuff the morning air..." Despite the fact that the horses pulling the coach are said to be headless, legend asserts that they have fire flashing from their nostrils! As with most of these stories I have been unable to find a single eye-witness of the apparition although the story is still well-known in and around Barsham.

I often read this legend and pondered on its origins: Who was Old Blunderhazard? Why has legend condemned him to this eternal ride? Where and what in Norwich is Hasset's Tower? Eventually I decided to delve into the historical background of the legend in an effort to answer some of these questions, but in doing so I discovered even more questiond than I did answers and uncovered a veritable mare's nest of fact and legend. As my research progressed I found that both ends of the legend - Barsham and Norwich - seemed to become more and more entwined and linked. However, I will start as I did in my original investigations at Barsham Hall. My original source of the legend was in the book 'The Norfolk Broads' by W.A.Dutt which gave only the barest outline of the legend of 'Old Blunderhazard' plus the additional information that he had been a member of the Blennerhassett family who "...had a house in Norwich but acquired property in Barsham..." This seemed a good place to start so I set out to discover how the family acquired their Barsham property and ever on the lookout for clues to the Blunderhazard legend.



BARSHAM HALL - from the only known drawing now in the Suffolk Record Office.

The family of Blennerhassett (like most 16th century familie they seemed uncertain as to how best to spell their name and quite often it was shortened to Hassett) had held lands in Frenze, Norfolk from as early as the 14th century. One of the descendants of this ancient family was John Blennerhassett (1424-1510) who had by his first wife 2 sons and a daughter. His eldest son Thomas 1461,-1531) also married twice his second wife bearing him two sons and five daughters. One of the sons, John, took as his second wife Mary Echingham of Barhsam Hall. Mary was the second daughter and co-heir of Sir Edward Echingham who family had been Lords of the Manor of Barsham since the early 15th century. It seems that after their marriage, John and Mary Blennerhassett took up residence



at Barsham Hall and upon the death of her father Mary inherited half of the Barsham Hall Estate, the other half going to her sister Anne who had married Sir Owen Hopton of Westwood Lodge, Blythburgh (another well-known Suffolk haunted house - see Lantern I2). Exactly when John Blennerhassett married Mary is not known, however, as his first wife was still living in I544 (she is mentioned in her father's will that year) and the first mention of a Blennerhassett in the Barsham parish registers is in I558, it is safe to assume that the marriage took place at some time between I544 and I558; my guess is that is was near the former date. Eventually John purchased his sister-in-law's half of the Barsham Hall estate and it seems that he was responsible for re-building (or perhaps extending) the old Echingham house and that it is the remains of his house that can be seen today. Evidence for this can be seen in the form of the Blennerhassett family crest with the date I563 still over the doors of what is now a barn.

Mary Blennerhassett died in I572 and John followed her to the grave in the july of I573. As far as can be ascertained they left eleven children, the eldest of whom was Thomas who inherited the Barsham Hall and estate. From this distance away in time it is impossible to ascertain the character of John Blennerhassett or his son Thomas, although there is an odd clause in the father's will which might perhaps give a clue as to Thomas's nature. In his will John directs:

> "...I give and bequeath to my eldest sone Thomas Bleverhaisett all my plate stuffe and utensils of house and corne and catell upon condicon that he be loving naturall and kinde to all his brothers and sisters..."

An odd condition, which (and I may be reading too much into it) perhaps indicates that Thomas was not over-flowing with the milk of human kindness!

Thomas married Mary, the daughter of Sir Christopher Heydon, Kt., whose dowry was "...ffive hundreth marke..." which according to John Blennerhassetts will was still unpaid in I573. Thomas enjoyed Barsham Hall and the estate for over 20 years, he and Mary raised four sons and three daughters there; but then on the I8th November, I598 for some reason that history does not record, he sold the whole lot, lock, stock and barrel, to a London Alderman named Robert Lee for £3.600, although it appears that he continued to reside there until his death the following year. He was buried in in Barsham church on May 4th I599. What became of Thomas's widow and his children after his death is not known, but to all intents and purposes upon the death of Thomas the short reign of the Blennerhassetts at Barsham came to an end - a reign that lasted only fifty years or so, and yet for some reason during that short span, something happened to make the memory of the Blennerhassetts of Barsham live on in the realms of legend - what it was we can only guess.

During the time the Blennerhassetts were at Barsham, probably in the life time of John, a curious tower was erected close to the southern end of the Hall, it consisted of:

> "...a round flint tower, 20 feet in diameter , though with walls only 3 inches thick...similar in appearance to the lower part of the church (Barsham) tower, but it is said to have been raised in the I6th century..."

This tower was known locally as 'Blennerhassett's Tower' and was believed by some to be the remains of a manorial pigeon cot. An old drawing which appears on a map made in I7I9 shows it as having a thatched and pointed roof. Another early description of this tower says that it was "...lofty with a spiral stair case..." Other uses variously ascribed to it include "a granary" and, as now believed by the present landowner and various local inhabitants "a gunpowder store". The truth is though its original purpose remains a mystery. In the I890s when the tower was falling into decay it was lowered and re-roofed, then in I945 it was damaged by a tractor and finally, in I948, it stood only seven feet tall and was so dilapidated and unsafe that the owner, Mr. John Suckling, ordered its demolishion (together with a pair of cottages close by that formed

(cont. on P.9)

TALES OF OLD WITCHCRAFT IN SUFFOLK

This is a copy of a letter sent to a Mr. John Morley and transcribed from Ernest R. Cooper's book 'Mardles From Suffolk', published in 1932. The letter from Halstead, Essex, is dated 1732:

Sir,

The narrative which I gave you in relation to Witchcraft, and which you have requested me to repeat is as follows:- There was one Mr. Collett, a smith by trade, of Haveningham in the County of Suffolk and formerly a servant in Sir John Duke's family, in Benhall near Saxmundham, Suffolk, who (as it was customary with him) assisted the dairy maid to churn or to make butter and not being able (as the phrase is) "to make the butter come" he threw an hot iron into the churn under a notion that there was Witchcraft in the case. At that time a man who was employed as a labourer and then at work in carrying off dung in the yard, cryed out in a terrible manner, "They have killed me!", still keeping his hand upon his back intinating where the pain was and died upon the spot. The poor man's cloaths were taken off and the servants found to their surprise, the mark of the iron that was heated and thrown into the churn deeply imprinted upon his back. This account I had from Mr. Collett's own mouth, who, being a man on unblemished chracter I verily believe to be a matter of fact.

I am Sir, Yr obliged servant,
Sam Manning.

R.A.H.

Early East Anglian ANTIQUARIANS

PART TWO: THE RESEARCHERS

by

Michael W. Burgess

In the last issue of LANTERN I gave some examples of the work done by antiquarians of the early 20th century such as Clarke, Dutt, Rye and Cross. Now I propose to give details of the men themselves: their backgrounds; their lives and the research they did that nowadays forms the backbone of the information available on East Anglian antiquities. Much can be discovered about Clarke and Rye and, to a lesser extent, Dutt. But Arthur Cross remains quite obscure, so anything additional that might be known about him would be well received.

In LANTERN 27 I intend to reproduce the entire contents of a paper on local 'geomancy' written by another early researcher, Percy A. Nash of Norwich, who was mentioned briefly in the last issue.

W. G. CLARKE: William George Clarke was born on January 7th, 1877, of East Anglian parents in Stokesley, Yorkshire. Upon winning a scholarship to the Grammar School at Thetford, he and his parents moved there, where he studied under the Rev. Benjamin Reed for a few years. During this time he became interested in the antiquities of Norfolk and, after six years working with his father as a printer, became known for his local articles in the 'Norwich Mercury' (foe which he became a journalist in 1897). Three years earlier he had been elected a member of the Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society, of which he later became President. With his knowledge of geology, topography and antiquarian matters grew his reputation, and his efforts in the field were later rewarded with being elected, unsought, a Fellow of the Geological Society. In October 1908 he founded the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia and, with W. A. Dutt, was its joint secretary

for many years. In his newspaper work he also prospered, becoming sub-editor of the 'Mercury'. After WWI (in which he served with the Norwich Cyclist Volunteers and the Army Pay Corps) he joined the editorial staff of the 'Eastern Daily Press', and married a Miss Holden of Thetford. (I know nothing of his daughter, but his son, Rainbird, grew up to become one of the most respected archaeologists of his day, dying in 1963). Besides his other positions Clarke was also founder of the Norwich Rambling Club; committee of the Castle Museum and the Norwich Public Library; and member of the Norfolk and Norwich Archeaological Society. Whilst editing the Proceedings of the P.S. of East Anglia he became renown for his literary work on the excavations at Grime's Graves, to which he devoted much of his spare time.

Clarke died in 1925 after a sudden illness at the premature age of 48. To his fellow researchers the heart had gone out of East Anglia. Although he wrote several other works it was the one that he finished only shortly before his death and which was published posthumously that set the seal on his fame. In Breckland Wilds (Robert Scott, London, 1925) was the culmination of his life's work in the desolate heaths around Thetford to which he gave the name 'Breckland'. As a masterpiece of history, archeaolgy, topography, wild-life, botany and folklore, in my opinion it remains unsurpassed. He put his entire soul into the book and although he had "a mind like a card index", his words on the plants, birds and animals of the brecks read like sheer poetry. It is this apparent paradox, I think, that distinquishes W.G.Clarke from many of his contemporaries. According to R.H.Mottram: "...Clarke had...little use for sentiment and romance...his notion of beauty and interest, of all that makes life worth living, was visible enough...in every blade of the tall rushes and wild herbs, in the squads of butterflies and birds...." and again: "...he had that deep and burning love of truth in the abstract and fact in the concrete..." Of the Breckland, H.J.Massingham said: "This strange land Clarke knew off by heart and by head. There was nothing he didn't know about it. Every insect, every bird, every mollusc, evry flower, nearly every rabbit - he knew where they were, why they were there, how they lived, how many there would be in the future." Couple all this with a devout feeling for the soil, a knowledge of rocks, a love of history and a profound need to learn more about his ancestors, and you have the epitome of a top-rate antiquarian. And yet he was not arrogant. Massingham, who knew him well, says: "On a considered view, he was the most humbled-minded man of learning I ever met. Yes, and the most open-minded, the freest of professional dogma." Although by nature an 'orthodox prehistorian (as could be seen by his writings in LANTERN 25), Clarke was never reluctant to consider thoughtfully newer and bolder theories. An example of this is his endorsement of Percy Nash's strange ideas about Roman geomancy. (Tobe given next issue). An invaluable service was Clarke's tracing of the northernmost end of the ancient Icknield Way, which he describes in detail in In Breckland Wilds.

In appearance Clarke was thin, narrow-shouldered, bespectacled, with a "skull perfectly round at the back as...a Cro-Magnon man's..." and he possessed "a mile-devouring stride" that made him hard to follow. Many epithets have

THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE LEY PROJECT - 1979

In 1932, Alfred Watkins wrote Archaic Tracks around Cambridge. In it he described a large number of leys in Cambridge and its surrounding district. Although these leys were published 47 years ago, little research has since been done on them and they have not been adequately checked.

Under the co-ordination of Nigel Pennick, The Institute of Geomantic Research is setting up a project this Summer to study Watkins's Cambridge leys and it plans to do accruate map and field-work on these alignments.

The I.G.R. would welcome offers of assistance in this project, especially of financial help or help in field-work. The results of this project will be published at a future date by the I.G.R. and progress reports will appear from time to time in the Journal of Geomancy.

Would-be helpers should contact Nigel at 142 Pheasant Rise, Bar Hill Cambs; or telephone Crafts Hill 80932.

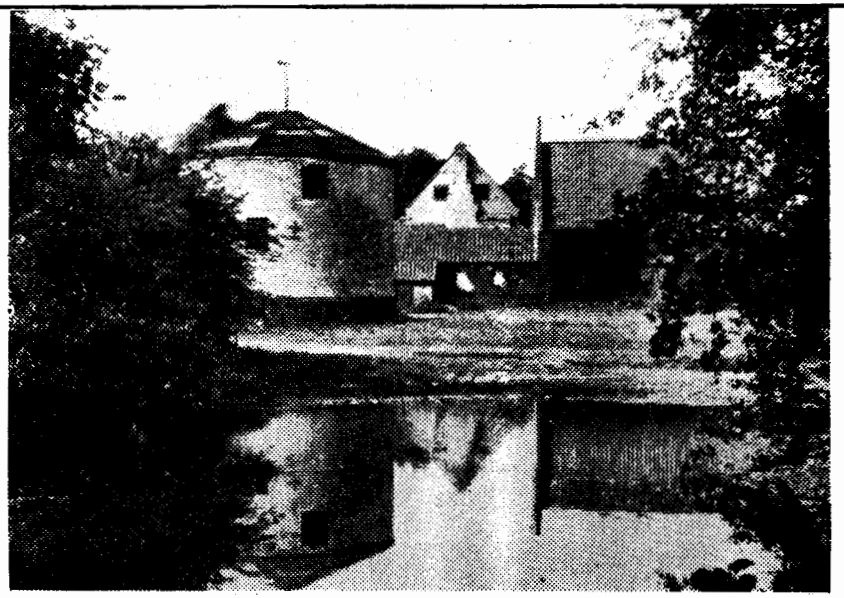
been applied to Clarke in praise of his natural abilities, such as Massinghams' (he)"...was a monarch of prehistory in East Anglia..." or "...a rare freak of local genius..." But I think the comment that sums up not only W.G.Clarke but also the archetypal ideal to which every archeaologist should aspire comes from Mottram: "He did not merely study prehistoric man. He was one."

W. A. DUTT: William Alfred Dutt was a totally different type of antiquarian to his contemporary and friend W.G.Clarke. Although both began their careers in journalism, their approaches to the subject soon diverged and Dutt pursued a less orthordox manner of research. He was born in the village of Ditchingham near Bungay on November I7th, I870. His father, William Henry Dutt, was by profession a carriage-builder, a trade which he continued when the family moved to Lowestoft around I890. After his education at Bungay Grammar School, Dutt took up a post under Sir Arthur Spugeon at the 'Eastern Daily Press' Lowestoft Office, then following him to London where he became Assistant Editor and Bobby Correspondent at the House of Commons for the National Press Agency. During this period he married for the first time but of his wife I can find no details. On September 26, I900, he married again, this time to Beatrice Maud the daughter of Edmund Gooch of 'The Winfields', Occold, Suffolk, but apparently he was none to happy with either partner. He left London a few years later because of ill-health, a problem which dogged him almost the whole of his life, and settled down to writing full-time. He was a prolific author, the vast majority of his books being concerned with natural history and archeaology in E. Anglia. His local volume in the 'Highways and Byways' series (I90I) was rated a classic of its day and in recognition of this he was given a dinner in his honour by the influential 'London Society of East Anglians'. Like Clarke he counted botany, geology and topography among his interests, and whilst in Lowestoft he added greatly to local knowledge of the various plant species growing around Oulton and Carlton Colville. Between I90I and I9II he produced well over a dozen popular books and pamphlets, of which the most noted were probably Norfolk Broads(I903), Wild Life in East Anglia(I906) and The Norfolk and Suffolk Coast(I909).

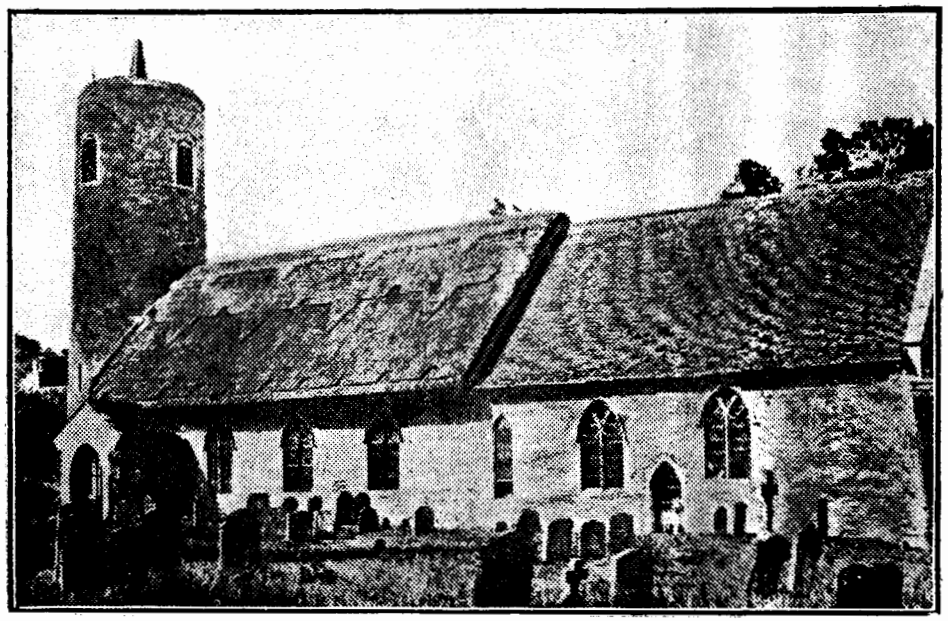
In I908, along with Clarke, he helped to found the Prehistoric Society and became its joint secretary; but, again due to ill-health, he resigned his position less than a year later. His early works were written at his address at 483 London Road, Kirkley, but when he moved to Carlton Colville with his wife in I908 the flair for detail that seemed to mark his books gradually faded away. His"cottage full of books" he called 'Romani Cottage'in honour of George Borrow and the roving life that he yearned so much for in his youth. Sometime in the I920s he seperated from his wife, she taking a house nearby in Elm Tree Road, and his health began to deteriorate even further.

From about I925 however, he attempted to regain some of his old skills and produced a further two or three booklets, although nothing on his earlier scale. Finding that he was unable to make ends meet from writing, he took a job as a costing clerk at John Chamber's Shipyard at Oulton Broad. It would seem that he'd had acquaintance with the Chambers family for many years. His father worked in coach-building with Edward Chambers and Son in Lowestoft. John Chambers, apart from being Dutt's employer, was also a fellow antiqarian, being the author of The Stone Age and Lake Lothing(I9II). Another antiquarian , Charles G. Chambers, (who wrote A Corner of Suffolk(I926)and various other local works) was friendly with Dutt and his wife for some time, and it was his daughter Doris who appears next to Stockton Stone in the drawing in Dutt's booklet The Ancient Mark-Stones of East Anglia(I926). It was this latter book which led me to the works of Dutt, being as it was the only published account available on the mysterious stones in the region. This booklet grew out of two articles which Dutt wrote for the 'Eastern Daily Press' in September and November of I925, which in turn were inspired by the appearance in I922 and I925 of the books by Alfred Watkins about his researches into the subject of ley lines. Dutt was immediately fascinated by the implications of this relatively new theory, and became one of Watkins' most ardent followers, tracing leys and the sites that marked them all over East Anglia. Here Dutt departed in his ways from W.G.Clarke who, if he had still

W. G. CLARKE (with his son RAINBIRD).
insert: WALTER RYE



'BLENNERHASSETT'S TOWER' BARSHAM, c1930 - FROM THE SOUTH.....



HOLY TRINITY CHURCH - BARSHAM:
the last resting place of Thomas Blennerhassett.

I.A.W. Bunn - 1979.

been alive, would probably have refused to speak to him again. Some measure of the difference in their attitudes can be judged from the correspondence reprinted in the last issue of LANTERN. Although a much better archeaologist than his Suffolk of the Little Guides leads one to fancy, Dutt nevertheless seems to have been rather naive as regards the evaluation of prehistory. Like Watkins, he was particularly poor on the subject of place-names, and like some others of his contemporaries (though not Clarke) he held a peculiar view of the place of the Celtic peoples in the eastern region - such as refferring the Roman camp at Brancaster to the legend of the Celtic god Bran.

The last published piece by Dutt thatI can trace appeared in the EDP in I929, where he expounded on a favourite topic, namely the importance of Tasburgh hill-fort in the ley-system of the area. His alignments however leave much to be desired. After this time he retreated more and more into his 'Romani Cottage', until he died from a sudden illness at the age of 68, on I7th September, I939. Alone and childless at the end, it would seem that he was given a pauper's burial since, although his funeral was attended by representatives from several of the local newspapers in tribute to his earlier work, of his grave in Carlton Colville churchyard I can find no trace. His estranged wife outlived him by many years, also being buried at Carlton in I96I. H.R.Lingwood described Dutt as "...very quiet and modest, a man full of Knowledge about East Anglia: a walking encyclopaedia..." His books are his only memorials.

(NOTE: Thanks are due to Mr.W.J.Chambers of Saffron Walden for helpful notes concerning W.A.Dutt).

WALTER RYE: This man can only be described as 'the Historian's historian'. His work in the field of records and genwalogy was truly monumental, no to mention a fiery interest in local antiquities and the preservation of the Norfolk Broads. He listed his own recreations in 'Who's Who' as "...athletic sports, (of late archery), lecturing, destructive pedigree, criticism and gardening." H e was born the son of Edward Rye in Chelsea on October 3Ist, I843, and solely through self-education rose to become a respected solicitor. In I870 he married Georgina Eliza Sturgess, with whom he produced the grand sum of four sons and three daughters. On moving to Norfolk, to the Rectory Cottage at Lammas, he lost little time in setting to work on the recorded history of his adopted region, producing upwards of 80 books on everything from 'Norfolk Songs, Stories and Sayings' to 'The Calendars of the Feet of Fines For Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire'. Moving to Norwich he became founder and Hon Secretary of the Norfolk Broads Protection Society; editor of the Norfolk Antiquarian Miscellany; and committee member (like Clarke) for the Castle Museum and Free Library. In fact, from I908 - 9 he was actually Mayor of Norwich. Even in old-age, when he resembled a hale and hearty Moses, he retained something of the old sporting vigour that had characterised his earlier life. Besides being Founder and President of The Thames Hare and Hounds and Hon. Secretary of the London Athletic Club, he was also champion Amateur Walker in I868, holding every world walking record from one mile to seven miles. As demonstrated in LANTERN 25, this fine old man with a mind as sharp and as probing as a scalpel had no time whatever for such 'perposterous' theories as those of Watkins, Dutt et al. He died at the ripe old age of 85, on February 24th I929, having delved into and re-published just about every obscure and unknown record in East Anglia. His Norfolk Essays (I926-28) are gems of their kind.

ARTHUR CROSS: The last of this set of early antiquarians is also the one of whom I have the least details. The Rev. Arthur Cross was born in I86I at Beccles, Suffolk, the son of Col. William Cross and Isabel Batten of Rochester, and grandson of the Rev. William Cross of Halesworth. After Bedford Grammar School he went on to receive his M.A. (and presumably his D.D.) at Christ's College, Cambridge. Following the Curacy of Hexham Abbey, he became assistant Chaplain and Bursar at the Royal Naval School, Eltham from I894 to 96. The following year saw him as Assistant Master and Chaplain to the Giggleswick School until I902. From I903 to I905 he was curate-in-charge at St.Peters Bedford, before taking up the the incumbency at Hapton, Norfolk in I907. I have no more dates for his life, save that in the period I922-26 he was Vicar

at Brisley, Norfolk. The Only independant publications I can find for his name are Links With the Past and St. Peter de Merton, Bedford. Other than these I can trace only two articles in the Transactions of the Norfolk & Norwich Archeaological Society, being on Time-Dialsin the Deanery of Depwade(I9I4), and Mural Paintings in Fritton Church(I9I7). Besides these we have only his letter about the ley-line controversy, printed in the last issue of LANTERN. In that at least we can see that his mind was far more open than either Clarke's or Rye's, possibly even than Dutt's, in that Arthur Cross was a geomancer and metrologer after the heart of Lockyer, Koop, Tyler and Petrie. Simplistic as it may be, the idea that 'Ancient Briton's' may have purposely placed many of their mounds and camps a number of 'Stonehenge units' apart obviously appealed to Cross. His faith that "...the great Architect of the Seas placed the white, black, blue and red on a line connecting the poles..." even if gullible, is touching and, of course, in keeping with his view as a vicar.

Again, if any reader knows any more about the Rev. Arthur Cross and his life, I'd like to know.

To be continued....

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GLEANINGS FROM THE 'LOWESTOFT JOURNAL'

April 7, I894: THE AURORA BOREALIS - An unusually brilliant illumination of the northern hemisphere was occasioned between 8 and I0 0'clock on Friday night by the appearance of the Aurora Borealis, more generally known as the Northern Lights. Towards I0 o'clock the best effect was seen. Five distinct streams of light shot upward from horizon to zenith, immediately afterward the western portion assumed quite a brilliant rose colour, while the eastern portion was bright yellow tinged with green, presenting a peculiarly beautiful effect. The sky was thickly studded with stars at the time, and the absence of the moon added lustre to the phenomena. Observers who have recently noted the reappearance of sun spots will no doubt find in this contemporaneous reappearance of the aurora some ground for supposition that the phenomena are closely related, a matter upon which opinions differ.

Celestial phenomena have been frequent of late. Recently a lunar rainbow of prismatic brilliance was observed - a very unusual occurence, regarded by sea-faring folk as the precursor of "dirty weather". A fine lunar halo has also been observed - a phenomena ascribed to the refraction and reflection of rays of light especially affected by the presence of minute snow crystals in the upper strata of the air. The phenomena was seen on saturday night, but not in such brilliance.

Space does not permit us to publish the complete extracts, but two interesting reports appeared later on in the year. On July 4th the LJ carried a lengthy report of a 'Terrible Thunderstorm' over the town, during which two long-shore fishermen were struck by lightning and killed. Even more interesting (espescially to students of Fortena) is the fact that exactly five weeks later to the day another 'Terrible thunderstorm' hit the the town and a cottage was struck by lightning. At the time a woman was standing in front of the fireplace when the lightning hit the chimney, but despite severe damage to the cottage she escaped un-harmed. The woman's name was Laura Ellis, the daughter of one of the long-shoremen who had been killed 5 weeks earlier!! This report appeared in the LJ of August I8th, I894.

November 24, I894: GRAMPUS WHALE LANDED AT YARMOUTH- On Monday morning a Yarmouth fishing boat landed on the fish market a small specimen of the 'Orca Gladiator', commonly known as the 'Grampus' or 'Killer' whale. This strange visitant...measures 6' in length... The 'Grampus' or 'Killer' whale is very rare on this coast, the last one being captured in I867. Paget also makes mention of two being taken previous to that date. It is described as being one of the most ferocious of the whale tribe.

OLD BLUNDERHAZARD (continued from page 3): the last inhabited remains of Barsham Hall). The rubble from the same was used to improve the surface of the lane that leads from the site of the Hall to the main road.

'Blennerhassett's Tower' at Barsham does not get a mention in the legend, but as 'Old Blunderhazard' is said to travel to 'Hasset's Tower' in Norwich, I began to suspect (wrongly as it later turned out) that the original story had become garbled down the years and that he travelled to Norwich in his coach and BACK to Hassett's Tower at Barsham.

Despite finding out a lot about the Blennerhassetts of Barsham and discovering the existence of a 'Hasset's Tower' (admittedly not in Norwich) I was still stumped by the phantom coach - Why a coach? Then I came across a copy of Thomas Blennerhassett's will - not a lengthy document like his father's - he mentions nothing specifically except that all his lands be sold and the money from them paid to his wife. To his surviving daughters he left:

> "...all their apparell and jewels, two kine, eight yearlings and nine weaning calves to be divided equally among them..."

All the residue of his goods he directed should be sold and the money divided between all his children. The rest of his will is taken up with this short but most interesting paragraph of all:

> "...I give to Mary my wife two of my best beds with all the furniture thereof, and all her apparell and jewels; and also my COCHE AND COCHE HORSES..."

Here at last was a specific mention of a coach and horses, apparently so dear to him that Thomas thought fit to give them a specific mention in his will. From this evidence there can be little doubt that Thomas is 'Old Blunderhazard'. who rides the legendary phantom coach of Barsham - But why? Alas we shall probably never know, but a little healthy speculation here will not go amiss. Writing in 1906, Florence Suckling has this to say about 'Old Blunderhazard':

> "...John Blennerhassett appears to have 'lived and died respected', but it may be that his son Thomas, actuated by remorse for the sale of his mother's patrimony, revisits the home of his youth. Since he has not been seen of late, his ghost may have been scared by the ugly new roof recently placed upon his tower by the present Lord of the manor..."

There is no evidence that Norwich was "...the home of his youth.." certainly, as will be seen later, John and Thomas Blennerhassett were related distantly to the family of the same name in Norwich, but there is no indication that the two families saw anymore of each other then than distant relations do today.

It seems, from the slender clue in his father's will, that perhaps Thomas was a bit temperemental - perhaps he was even a bit of an 'oddball'. Could it be that he drove his 'coche and coche horses'around the neighbourgood (perhaps to Norwich which would have been the 'in place' for young blades in the 16th century) and a break-neck speed terrorising the local popoluance - the Elizabethan version of todays angry young man in a sports car! This would certainly not have endeared him to the people of Barsham and then, in keeping with his reckless nature, he suddenly up and sells the whole Barsham estate to a complete outsider, a 'furriner' as non-East Anglians are still called in these parts. Even today East Anglians are by nature suspicious of 'furriners' and there is no reason to suspect that they were less so 400 years ago. This act, together with his antics in his coach and horses, probably made Thomas Blennerhassett a good topic of conversation among the people of Barsham long after his death; and it is from these conversations and tales, no doubt suitably embroidered as time passed, that the 'Old Blunderhazard legend has sprung.

Unfortunately the Hall has all but gone and with it any clues as to what happened at Barsham. The Hall and estate passed from the Lee family to Sir John Suckling who owned the adjoining manor of Roos Hall, and in the hands of whose descendants it remains to day. Between 1802 and 1812 Robert Suckling demolished most of it apart from one section which had been divided into cottages.

This brings to an end the first part of the 'Blunderhazard' story. In the next edition LANTERN, I'll take a close look at the Norwich end of the legend, Notes references and acknowledgements will appear in the next issue. ++++++++

THE BLOODY HAND

a fragment of a tale....

Many unusual stories proliferate for a time and gain credence only to diminish fade and become forgotten as time passes on. Some are based on actual happenings, some most certainly are not; all, in their time, have held a grip on popular imagination but for whatever reason have become largely forgotten or treated with scorn. How many such tales remain unrecorded? Well, who could possibly know?

I have such a tale; not of great interest to students of such matters perhaps, somewhat inconsequential no diubt, lacking in glamour and recondite. Yet told by someone with first-hand experience (though now remembered only vaguely) and possibly hitherto unrecorded. A tiny fragment of local ghost-lore for the loss of which we should be th poorer. It concerns the now ruined and ill-fated farm in Hall Lane, Oulton, near Lowestoft. Young Albert, who was brought up in 'Mobbs' Cattages' (nearly opposite the farm) used to play there as a lad, sometime he reckons about 1950. 'Boardleys Farm' he called it, and it was empty and derelict even then. The local children used to gather there and play. In one room of the empty farmhouse was a large cupboard set into the wall, and they would open it and stare inside and, no doubt, run away shrieking, claiming that they could see a "bloody hand" either floating or laying in the darkness. Albert said it was common knowledge at the time that in the past someone (the owners' brother?) had lost a hand in an accident with a threshing machine on the farm and had died as a result. The hand presumably being his. At sometime, Albert had gone to the cupboard with a spiritualist who had stated that there was indeed "something" in there. There was also a mention made of the apple tree in the garden that bore no fruit in testimony to the fact that someone had once hung themselves from its branches.

Well, it hardly seems to matter now. The farm has all but disappeared and the associated tale is hazy and disjointed. Perhaps it should serve as an example of the inexorable fate of rural beliefs, and leave us wondering how much has actually gone of which we will never learn anything..... R.A.HAXELL.

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EXCHANGE MAGAZINES

+THE LEY HUNTER - THE magazine of Earth Mysteries. Annual Sub: (UK) £3.00. Published quarterly from :Paul Devereux, PO Box 152, London N10 2EF.

+CAULDRON - 'A newsletter of the Old Religion'; published quarterly, annual sub 80p from: BCM 1633, London WC1V 6XX, England.

+FORTEAN TIMES - The magazine of curiosities, mysteries and strange phenomena: Quarterly, annual sub: £3.00, single copies 75p from R.J.M.Rickard, c/o 9/12 St. Annes Court, London W1.

+MUFOB - wider aspects of UFO research and associated subjects; Annual Sub is £1.75 (4 issues) from 11 Beverley Road, New Malden, Surrey, KT3 4AW.

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EAST SUFFOLK AND NORFOLK ANTIQUARIANS.

SPELTHORN 4

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******* ******* ******* ******* ******* *****

If he's reading this,could NIGEL CERNLEY of Wattisham please drop me a line, 'cos I owe him a reply and I've lost his original letter and address.....

******* ******* ******* ******* ******* *****

No.25...TUNNEL*****In the 1860's the altar at Ingham church in Norfolk was taken down for repairs,and they found 19 skeltons piled beneath it.But they also found the entrance to an underground passage which was said to run from Ingham Manor House to the ruined priory on the north side of the church. As usual,no-one ever bothered to check it out,and it was covered over again.

No.26...GIANT*****In 1665,the sea washed the cliff-face away at the mouth of the 'Hundred Stream'(at Thurne in Norfolk)exposing a massive bone 38" long and weigning 57 pounds.Although washed-up whalebones are quite common along this coast,the learned doctors of the area pronounced it to be a human thigh bone.For a femur of that size,the man to whom it belonged would have to have been about 10 feet high!

No.27...FORTEANA*****From the 'Merlinus Anglicus Junior' by William Lilly, (1644) comes the following: "At St.Edmunds-Bury,in Suffolk,Sep.6,1660,in the middle of the Broad Street,there were got together,an innumerable company of Spiders of a redish colour...These Spiders marched together,and in a strange kind of order,from the place where they were first discovered,towards one Mr.Duncomb's house,a member of the late Parliament...they would shun the people,and kept themselves together in a body till they came to the said Duncomb's house...there they staied,and many of them got under the door into the house,but the greatest part of them...spun a very great web presently from the one post to the other,and then wrapt themselves in it in two very great parcels that hung down near to the ground,which the servants of the house...got dry straw and laid it under them,and putting fire to it by a suddain flame consumed the greatest part of them...all the use that the Gentleman made of this strange accident,so far as we can learn,is only that,he believes they were sent to his house by some Witches.

The same day were also seen a great Swarm of flyes flying over the said town...their multitude was so great that the sky seemed to be darkened by them;both these relations come from credible persons,eye-witnesses,however, the truth of these things is notoriously known to the Generalitie of the Inhabitants in that Town."

No.28...QUERY*****Does anyone know the exact location of a burial mound near Thetford in Norfolk,called 'Thet Hill',and said to be haunted by a benevolent, red-haired chieftain?

No.29...HIDDEN TREASURE*****The treasure that King John lost when he was crossing the Wash is still said to be hidden in a dank pool known as 'King John's Hole',somewhere on the left-hand side of the road from King's Lynn to Long Sutton.I wonder where?

No.30...STONE*****A massive glacial erratic rests on the green at Back Street (Mendlesham,Suffolk),and is known as the 'Preaching Stone'.It is said that John Wesley preached from it,and 360 years before him,the mendicant friars.

No.31...SPRINGS*****In ESNA Occasional Paper No.2 I made mention of the twelve springs that welled out of the ground at Hunstanton(Norfolk)when St.Edmund first landed in England.I now find further mention of these in the 'De Infancia Sancti Eadmundi',wriiten by Galfridus de Fontibus around 1140-60.He rel-

ates how,when Edmund knelt to give thanks for his safe landing,there miraculously issued from the ground springs of such sweetness that the place became known as Honestanton(Honey-stone town.) Both this,and Munford's contention that the name derives from the 'Hun's' or 'Giant's Stone',seem to indicate the existence of a boulder there.A photograph in my possession,taken about 30 years ago,shows a large stone somewhere in the promenade area of the town,but then again,rocks from the cliffs are quite common in that part of Norfolk.So,is there another stone at Hunstanton,one which may have given its name to the town?Anybody know?

No.32...FORTEANA***** From 'Spacelink',July 1968,p.22: "Fish between 6" and 12" long appeared in several gardens in Harlow,Essex,on August 12th,1968. Housewives who found them threshing about on the grass were unable to discover where they had come from."

From a teetotaler's tract of about 1630,'Of Healths drinking,and Heaven's doom thereon:Part of a Letter from Mr.Abr.Ramsbotham':-"Within four or five miles of my house,the first of July(as I take it),at a town called Geslingham(NB.Gislingham in Suffolk),there were three or four persons in a shopkeeper's house,drinking of Strong waters,and of HEALTHS,as 'tis spoken.And all of a sudden there came a flame of fire down the chimney with a great crack,as of thunder,or of a canon,or granado;which for the present struck the men as dead.But afterwards they recovered;and one of them was,as it were, shot in the knee,and so up his Breeches and Doublet to his shoulder;and there it brake out,and split and brake in pieces the window,and set the house on fire;the geater part of which burned down to the ground.This hath filled the Country with wonder,and many speak their judgements both on it,and of the persons."

No.33...TUNNELS*****Several more tunnel traditions have turned up lately, including one said to run from the vicarage at Southwold towards the sea, probably connected with smuggling(East Anglian Mag,Vol.26,p.463.)

In Norwich,tunnels are believed to run from the Castle to Carrow Priory, and again from the Castle to the Cathedral,whilst one in Gt.Yarmouth runs from St.Nicholas' church to the Priory(E.Anglian,or Notes & Queries,Vol.2, p.340.)

There is the legend of another subterranean passage running from Ranworth Old Hall to the ruins of St.Benet's Abbey at Ludham(Norf.Arch,Vol.21, Procs.p.lviii.)

No.34...STONES*****(See No.1)John G.Williams in 'SpellThorn' No.1 gave a list of some stones that he knew of,including one,the 'Fodderstone',in Norfolk.The 'Victoria County History' also makes mention of this particular rock: "Another remarkable boulder of Kimeridge Clay was observed by Mr.Reid at Fodderstone Gap,between Shouldham and South Runcton."

William E.Norris in the 'Eastern Daily Press' for September 16th,1925 notes another Norfolk erratic: "There is near here a stone marking the boundary of the three parishes of Twyford,Guist and Foulsham.It is in the bottom of a ditch,and I doubt if a dozen people know of its existence. It was pointed out to me by the late Mr.Purdy,of Aylsham."

No.35...OLD LORE*****I mentioned the following in ARP No.1,but Chambers' 'Book of Days'(Vol.2,p.322)adds a little extra:"The price of corn rises and falls with Barton Mere-an eccentric piece of water,which varies in size from twelve or fourteen acres to a small pond,and is sometimes entirely dried up. It lies about four miles from Bury St.Edmunds,and a worthy old farmer,now deceased,used frequently to ride to Barton Mere to observe the state of the water there,before proceeding to Bury market.I do not know of anyone who does this now,but it is an observed fact that the price of corn,and the height of the water,frequently DO vary together:for instance,corn is now(October 1862)very low,and the mere is nearly dry."

No.36...QUERY*****Has anyone ever heard of,or know where I can get a copy of, a pre-1864 booklet by F.W.Fairholt,F.S.A.,called "The Giants in Guildhall, with an Account of other Civic Giants,at Home and Abroad"?

Michael W.Burgess.

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***** **** *** **End of 'SpellThorn' No.4.** *** **** *****